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FEB 19 1919

THE CLAIM

OF

THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION
OF THE GOSPEL,

UPON ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH.

A SERMON

BY THE

RIGHT REV. JOHN INGLIS, D.D.
BISHOP OF NOVA SCOTIA.

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TO HIS GRACE THE PRESIDENT,
TO THE VICE-PRESIDENTS,
AND TO THE INCORPORATED AND ASSOCIATED MEMBERS
OF
THE SOCIETY FOR
THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL IN FOREIGN PARTS.

The following Sermon

IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY PRESENTED,
WITH AN EARNEST DESIRE AND PRAYER
THAT IT MAY BE MADE INSTRUMENTAL, HOWEVER HUMBLY,
TO THE SUCCESS OF THAT PORTION OF THE GREAT WORK
OF THE CHURCH
WHICH IS COMMITTED TO THEIR ZEAL AND PIETY, AND TO THEIR
FAITHFUL AND UNREMITTING EXERTIONS.

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SERMON.

PSALM LXVII.—VER. 2.

*That Thy way may be known upon earth ; Thy saving health
among all nations.*

THIS Psalm, which the Church has twice introduced into her solemn services, is described as *a prayer for the enlargement of God's kingdom, to the joy of the people, and the increase of God's blessings.*

The observations which have been made upon it by a commentator of distinguished piety and eloquence are well calculated to animate the feelings which we would desire to cherish, whenever we advert to the preservation of the Gospel and its holy influence among ourselves, or to the extension of its blessings to all others. And these observations are so appropriate to the subjects to which I would earnestly desire to draw the deepest attention of all who are now before me, that I do not scruple to repeat them, although they may be familiar to some who are assembled in this place.

"In this Evangelical Hymn," as the pious Bishop Horne observes, "the *Israelitish* Church is introduced as partly praying for, and partly foretelling, "the advent of Christ, and the conversion of the "nations, with the joy and gladness consequent

“thereupon. The *Christian Church* now uses, and
 “will continue to use, the Psalm with propriety,
 “until the fulness of the Gentiles shall be come in,
 “the conversion of the Jews effected, and Christ
 “shall appear the second time, finally to accomplish
 “the salvation of His chosen.

“In the first verse, the *Israelitish Church*, by
 “the mouth of the Prophet, expresseth her ardent
 “desire after Messiah's advent, that God would *be*
 “*merciful unto her*, as He had promised; that by so
 “doing He would bless her with the blessings of
 “pardon and peace, of grace and glory; and, in
 “one word, that He would cause His face to shine
 “upon her, or show her *the light of His counte-*
 “*nance*, by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness,
 “making her to behold the glory of God in the
 “face of Jesus Christ, reviving her with the glad
 “tidings of the Gospel, and enlightening her with
 “the light of salvation.” “Nor was she studious,”
 as the same commentator observes, immediately
 upon the words of the text, “Nor was she studious,
 “as her degenerate children have since been, to
 “confine the favour of heaven within her *own* pale.
 “If she had a good wish for herself, she had one
 “likewise for others; and therefore prayed that
 “the *way* of life eternal might *be known*, not in
 “Jewry alone, but over all the *earth*; and that the
 “virtues of that salutary medicine which was able
 “to restore health and vigour to the diseased and
 “languishing spirits of men might be published
 “*among all nations.*”

The words before us, thus explained, will not, I hope, be thought inappropriate to an address which is designed, if God should graciously be pleased so to bless it, to excite your affectionate regard for the objects and the labours of an ancient and venerable Society, who, in their efforts for the extensive Propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, have long been, and still are, most anxiously desirous to make the *way of God known upon earth*, and *His saving health among all nations*. And if this regard shall, by God's blessing, be duly excited in your breasts, it will not be difficult to animate your desires to partake of their continual labour of liberality and love; nor will your consideration be refused to the peculiar and extensive and pressing calls, which are made at the present time, to cooperate, to the extent of our ability, in the holy objects of the Society. And *whatsoever your hand findeth to do*, be persuaded, Brethren, *to do it with your might*, in a matter involving the dearest interests of those thousands, of those tens and hundreds of thousands, of your distant brethren, who have the claims of kindred and country to urge upon your benevolence; and deeply connected also with the eternal welfare of those millions of immortal beings, whom the providence of God has placed under the dominion of this favoured nation. Yea, do it with *all your might*, as a Christian duty, in humble faith and love—and the blessing of the Lord our God will surely rest upon it.

It may well be matter of surprise, but it is nevertheless a fact, that although it is owing to this Society, under God, that our own pure branch of the Christian Church has any existence in a large portion of the world, the history and labours of the Society are very imperfectly known, even among the members of our own communion. Although it is solely owing to the efforts of this Society, under the heavenly blessing, that the way of the Lord and his saving health have been made known to many a settlement that was sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death; yet many, who would anxiously desire to promote a knowledge of the Redeemer's kingdom throughout the earth, have scarcely heard of the existence of the Society. Some pious clergymen have recently and publicly acknowledged, with regret, and even with shame, as they expressed themselves, that they had taken no part in the Society's objects, from entire ignorance of their history and designs.* It has,

* A very respectable Clergyman, in the immediate neighbourhood of London, declared some time ago that he knew nothing of the Society's operations; and that he was not aware that they ever printed reports of those operations, though this has been their uniform custom for nearly a century and a half. This fact was mentioned in different places, upon the supposition that it was a single instance of extraordinary ignorance; but many similar instances were found in other parts of the country. Several persons have assured themselves they were members of *this Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*, because they subscribed to the *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*, or the *Church Missionary Society*. It may be hoped that such mistakes will be corrected everywhere.

however, happily been found, that as an acquaintance with those objects has been increased, the desire to cooperate in them has been excited; and the more those who are best acquainted with them dwell upon the benefits and blessings dispensed by the Society, the more desirous they become to share *largely* in the delight of contributing, by all possible means, to their prosperity and usefulness. I may therefore hope for your patient attention while endeavouring to interest you in the history and labours of this ancient Institution of the Church.

Its origin will carry us back to the close of the seventeenth century. It was an age of licentiousness and profligacy;—would to God that no similar charge could be brought against the present time! To check these great evils, several small associations were formed, in a truly christian spirit, by a few pious members of the Church, *for the reformation of morals*, and for *religious improvement*; and from these associations the valuable *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* took their rise.

It is interesting to revert to the circumstances under which these ancient Church associations were formed. At the present time, societies of various kinds are greatly encouraged by the spirit and fashion of the age; they are easily created now for any attractive, or even plausible object. It was not so when these primitive societies were formed; they received no aid from the common

taste and feeling of their day, and could only look for support in the narrow channel through which the stream of genuine christian charity was wont to flow. Their work was carried on with such lowliness of mind, and with such entire dependence upon the Heavenly blessing alone, that no effort was made to attract the notice, and win the applause of the world; the silent, and almost secret promptings of religious benevolence were the only sources of their earthly assistance. But the hearts and the prayers of their members were raised to HIM, whose heavenly blessing was so imparted to their labours, that their grain of mustard-seed, thus sown in faith, soon became a goodly tree; and we can now behold its branches spreading over the four quarters of the globe, dispensing the blessings of heavenly hope and joy to thousands who sit under their shade in holy thankfulness of heart, and gratefully imbibe the healing dews which distil from their leaves.

It is however worthy of remark, that humble as these Societies were in their origin, and circumscribed and silent, and almost secret, as their first movements were, much more is fairly to be attributed to their influence than would seem to have been effected by their immediate agency. They first led the way, and by their example, however unwilling to display it, they prompted others to works of benevolence like their own, for they could not conceal the good to which they were instrumental.

Much of the first labour and bounty of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel was directed to those portions of the western world, then colonies of England, which now form the United States of America; and their early records show that these first efforts were richly blest by the favour of that God for whose glory they were made, to whose blessing they were commended. The separation of those colonies from the British Empire, after the lapse of many years, necessarily terminated the Society's immediate connexion with the Church which they had planted there, and watered with unceasing care. But the good seed was so happily sown, and so richly nourished by the dews of Heavenly grace, that a plenteous harvest has followed. From one end of those extensive States to the other, the benefits derived through the instrumentality of the Society are still cherished in grateful and affectionate recollection. It is every where, among them, thankfully acknowledged, that, under the blessing of God, it is owing to the benevolent exertions and the pious care of *the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*, who first planted that Gospel, in its purest form, among them, that a Protestant Episcopal Church has its present existence there, where happily it now flourishes abundantly.

I know not whether any importance can be added to a fact so gratifying as this, by an assurance that the person who addresses you heard

these thankful acknowledgments, during the course of a few months, from seven Bishops, nearly one hundred Clergymen, and a multitude of lay members of the Church, in various portions of that extensive country.

In the fact itself, and in such grateful acknowledgment of it, the Society may well see cause for their own humble thankfulness; and abundant encouragement to perseverance in their endeavours to make *known the way of God*, in the distant parts of the earth, and *His saving health among all nations*.

The present colonies in America were but little known at the time of the Society's first labours. The greater part of them, indeed, were then under a foreign government. In Newfoundland, however, which was an ancient possession of the British crown, the Society had their Missionaries early in the last century: and they sent a Missionary and a Schoolmaster with the first settlers who emigrated to Halifax, more than ninety years ago, and made similar provision for other settlements, as they were formed in the forests of Nova Scotia, and the adjoining provinces of New Brunswick, the Canadas, and Prince Edward Island. This field, though thinly peopled at first, has been continually increasing in settlers. The revolution in America added greatly to the population of these new colonies, and the Missionaries and Schoolmasters were proportionally increased, as the funds of the Society would permit.

But notwithstanding all that this Association endeavoured to effect, the demand upon them soon became too great for their means. The whole provision they were able to afford for the Ministry of the Gospel, though partially assisted by the Government, was so limited, and the discouragements were so great, that, for many years, it was hardly possible to supply the few Missions which then existed with suitable Missionaries. The Society, therefore, about twenty-seven years ago, made extraordinary exertions, and by a large increase of members and benefactions, and by appeals, then happily successful, to the Government as well as to the public, they were enabled to raise their Missionaries above the pressure of want, while engaged in their laborious work; to secure such as were worn out by that work from distress at the close of life; and, what was most gratifying to those whose feelings were best entitled to regard, they secured a small, but comparatively comfortable support to the widows of those Missionaries who died in their service, and assistance in the education of their children, when any of those children were likely to be qualified to succeed their fathers in the labour of the Missionary field. These arrangements have already secured the comfort of many meritorious individuals; and a very happy effect is exhibited in the value of many exemplary Missionaries, who have been thus assisted in their education, and are now eminently adorning their sacred profession by zealous devotion to the service

of their Heavenly Master, and successful labours in the Ministry of His Church. The Society have also been enabled to aid the building of numerous Churches in most of the colonies, where the people, however poor, have always been willing to do their part for the attainment of so great a blessing; and they have founded a most important College at Calcutta, besides several smaller seminaries in the eastern possessions of the crown, for rearing native teachers of religion; and are now sustaining similar institutions with the happiest results, in several of the western colonies.*

Here it is most important to add, that in all their pious undertakings, the Society have been especially distinguished as the agents *of the Church*. Per-

* In many small settlements in the North American colonies, the people, though so poor, that the loss of a day's labour sometimes exposes them to the loss of a day's food for their families, have given their time and labour, (all they had to give,) and have given them most cheerfully, for the erection of a little temple, in which they might worship the God of their fathers. Many humble churches have thus been erected, with no other extrinsic aid than a grant of 25*l.* or 30*l.* from the Society, which has often been expended in providing a competent mechanic to superintend the labour of the poor people. Some of these little churches have been built with such taste, that they would do no discredit to an English hamlet; and often the attachment of the people to these buildings is of the most happy and holy character. It is melancholy to add, that, in several places, churches *so built*, and *so cherished*, have gone to decay, before it has been possible to send a Missionary to serve in them, although the hope of obtaining a Missionary prompted the great exertions by which the buildings were completed.

haps there is no Society in the world whose whole conduct and management are more strictly in accordance with her principles. They are under the immediate guidance of the spiritual fathers of the Church in all their deliberations and proceedings at home; and the heads and governors of the Colonial Church are their immediate agents abroad. All things pertaining to them are done in apostolic order; and thus the great doctrines of the gospel are inculcated in the way which the Divine Head of the Church has appointed and enjoined. The unity of the Spirit is thus preserved: the bond of peace is thus ratified. Nor can it be doubted that this fact, no less than the antiquity of the Society, the extent and perseverance of their labours, and the success with which those labours have hitherto been favoured by the Heavenly blessing, will recommend this Society to my present hearers as the proper channel for their contributions towards making the *way of God known upon earth, His saving health among all nations*; and will so recommend the Society, not only to the entire approval of your best judgment, but likewise to the warmest affection of your hearts.

It must not, however, be supposed that the *benefits* hitherto derived from the exertions of the Society (invariably guided in the path of scriptural truth and apostolic order) have been *confined* exclusively to the members of our own communion. Respect and influence have thus been secured gene-

rally for religion and the Gospel of the Son of God ; and the advantages thus conferred upon distant lands have been shared, perhaps unconsciously, by all there who profess a faith in the revelation of the Divine Redeemer. The mildness and the moderation of the Church which has been thus nourished, and the solemnity and sobriety of her scriptural and spiritual services, have had a tendency to check the wildness of enthusiasm, and to brighten the gloom of superstition, which every where find a fruitful field among the ignorant and untaught. Indeed, the advantages which have been conferred upon many who are not of our communion, by the bounty of the Society, and by the labours of their Missionaries and Schoolmasters, have been readily acknowledged by many respectable individuals among themselves; and it is due to them to state, that upon several occasions they have been anxious, even as her own members, to uphold her influence by their liberal assistance.

Thus far, my Christian brethren, your attention has been directed to those particulars in the early history of the Society, which are chiefly of a gratifying character, and as such, well calculated to win your regard, and encourage your assistance. It would be happy if we had no detail to offer of a less pleasing nature; but it would be a dereliction of duty, to neglect the opportunity which is now afforded for pressing upon your notice some other facts which can scarcely fail to interest your best

feelings, although the recital may inflict some pain upon those feelings.

Much as the Society have been enabled to accomplish in their endeavours to promote the glory of God and the salvation of souls, they have never yet been able, even in the days of their greatest prosperity, to supply all the demands which have been made for their assistance; their means have never been as ample as they ought to have been, and as they would have been, if the calls upon them had been more generally known. But very great and important changes have occurred, abroad and at home, which will render the Society incompetent to the discharge of their high duties, in any adequate degree, unless their hands be *greatly* and continually strengthened;—not because they are less aided by the contributions of the benevolent than they were in former times; for happily these contributions are greater now than they have ever been before;—not because the Society are less zealous and active now than they were in the years that have passed; for never was their labour greater, nor their zeal more quickened, than at the present time;—but an extended field has been opening before them, until it has become so immense, that they require a great and general and permanent support, which can only be obtained by the combined and permanent efforts of all the members of the Church, throughout the length and breadth of this favoured kingdom.

I would first beg your attention to the rapid and astonishing increase of population in those scenes of the Society's labour which have already been brought before you. The natural increase of itself has been very remarkable; but this has been enlarged, in a tenfold degree, by emigration from this side of the ocean;—by emigration, let it be remembered, which has been encouraged here, for the convenience of being relieved from the pressure of a superabundant population at home. Hundreds of thousands of your countrymen have thus been cast upon the American colonies alone, with hardly a thought of the religious destitution which awaited them upon their removal from the land of their nativity and their religion.

Those who have never had an opportunity of witnessing the struggles and privations and discouragements to which the first settlers in the forest are exposed, can hardly comprehend their nature, or realize their extent. But if there be a situation upon earth, which in a most peculiar manner requires the blessings of religious instruction, and religious comfort and consolation, it is that of these poor settlers in the wilderness. These blessings were their privilege (a privilege often too little valued, while it is possessed) before they left their native home; and it has been my lot, in many an afflicting instance, to hear the loss of it bewailed in sounds of deepest sorrow, prompted by an aching heart, and proved by a stream of tears. And well

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may such sorrow wring the hearts of those who behold their children growing up without an opportunity for admission within the pale of the Christian Church,—who hear no message of peace and joy for themselves or for their offspring, from the voice of the messenger of the gospel,—to whom the public worship of God is no longer known, and the bread of life and the cup of salvation are no longer consecrated for the nourishment of their souls. Sad indeed is their lot who have to view, and sadder still the lot of those who have to feel, the anguish that is added to the pains of sickness, the bitterness of woe that presses upon the sorrows of the unconsolated mourner, and the terrors which crowd around the *unvisited* bed of the departing sinner, when no commissioned herald is within their call to proclaim that exceeding weight of glory, at the contemplation of which every present suffering is accounted light; to soothe the saddest sorrows by the chartered promises of the Saviour's mercy, which bind up the broken heart, and comfort those who mourn; and to direct the closing eye to an incorruptible inheritance, and shed hope and peace and joy, the blessed fruits of heavenly faith in the Redeemer, around the bed of the departing.

A single instance of privation and suffering like this would surely be sufficient to awaken the sympathy of every feeling and religious heart. Brethren, I grieve to tell you there are *hundreds* of such cases; but it is in your power to assist in the relief of them;

and often, when I have been passing through such settlements as I have described, from day to day, and from week to week, and have listened to the imploring importunities of the best of their inhabitants, and particularly of the aged and the fathers and mothers of families among them, for pastors and teachers; and when I have been depressed in spirit at my inability to afford relief; the reflection has been forced upon my mind, that if their case could be fully brought before the numerous congregations in this happier country, and the scenes which are there continually presented could be faithfully represented here, there would soon be a Missionary and a teacher in every place where they are so greatly needed. Nor would you be without abundant encouragement to assist in sending them, if you could witness the gratitude which is often called forth when these spiritual wants are relieved; gratitude which is manifested by acts as well as words,—by acts not unworthy of your imitation here. You would find aged individuals among these settlers who, though living ten miles distant from their church, have never been once absent from the public service in the space of several years. You would find children walking nearly the same distance to their Sunday School, and never absent, nor even late, during the severity of a long American winter.*

* The instances here alluded to came within the view of the writer.

You will forgive the wish to have a clear knowledge of such facts pressed upon the consideration of those who are able, and haply willing, to afford relief; and you will join in the prayer that the result may be greatly blessed, to the glory of God, the prosperity of the Church, and the salvation of many souls.

But it is time for me to proceed to other causes of the present peculiar pressure upon the Society, and of the present claim upon those who would aid them in their holy work.

Let me then next direct your attention to the *Eastern* possessions of the empire. The field, which, within a few years, has been opened there for the labours of the Society, is immeasurable. Millions, yea, many millions of our fellow-creatures in that quarter of the world, and under the dominion of this country, now sit in deplorable darkness, which can only be dispelled by the light of revelation. The *way of God* is still unknown to these pupils of pagan and mahomedan superstition; *His saving health* has never yet been sufficiently carried to these *nations*; but there are *signs of the times* in those extensive regions, which now especially invite the earnest efforts of the Society. The Church, in all her integrity, is spreading through our settlements there, and now exercising an holy influence over our own countrymen who are mingled with the heathen. The word of life eternal is forcing its way through the impediments of languages

which have hitherto been scarcely known. The native teachers are going forth, duly instructed and prepared by the care of our Society, to triumph over all the opposition of *Caste*; and the idols are now tottering, at the announcement of the name of Jesus, in the very heart of India. The Society dare not abstain from attempting to perform their part in holy endeavours to promote the conversion of these nations, and bring them in humble faith to the teaching of the Saviour of the world, and to a share in the triumph of the cross of Christ.

Another extensive and urgent call is made upon the Society by the rapidly-growing population in the convict colonies; and the demand thus made no one, who is influenced by love of the Redeemer, would disregard. Many thousands of our countrymen willingly avail themselves of the encouragement which invites emigration to those shores; and these are equally objects for the benevolent care of the Society with those in the Western hemisphere, whose case has already been set before you. But besides these, several thousands are forcibly sent thither every year in punishment for offences committed here; and they are so transported for the benefit of the inhabitants of this kingdom. It is not easy to imagine the full extent of wickedness, of darkest and deadliest character, to which these victims of sin are carried by the enemy of souls, when removed, as they are now removed, from the influence of all those habits and

restraints, which, in a Christian land like this, create some discouragement, and supply some check, even to the most determined offenders. Dreadful, most dreadful, therefore, is their moral condition in the land of their banishment. The Sabbath is unknown among them, or known only to be most wantonly and wickedly desecrated. The name of God is scarcely mentioned by thousands, but in sounds of horrid and studied blasphemy. Reckless of all consequences, eternal as well as temporal, these unhappy offenders have already fallen into the lowest depths of iniquity; and unless snatched, by the infinite mercies of God in Christ, as brands out of the fire, must fall into the lowest depths of perdition hereafter. To raise them from so deplorable a condition, the Society are now attending to the anxious calls which continually reach them from the shores of Australia on behalf of these unhappy men; and relying upon the goodness of God to move effectually the hearts of *many* benefactors, they have already sent, and are still sending, at the anxious call of the Bishop, many Missionaries to labour for their rescue.—And who among you will refuse to aid this pious work, and to join in the hope and the prayer of the Society, that the mercies of God, through the mediation of the Redeemer, may reach the hearts of these convicts, in their distant banishment, and bring back these guilty wanderers, in lowliest penitence and faith, to the home of their

Father and our Father, of their God and our God?

But still another call has reached the Society, on behalf of several hundred thousands of the African race, who were long, too long, held in debasing bondage in other colonies of the empire, until christian sympathy finally accomplished its labour of love, and freed them from their fetters. For many years a small portion of this race, in one of the West Indian Islands, was under the temporal as well as spiritual care of the Society; and by the example which these have now furnished, they have given testimony to the wisdom which guided the Society's christian treatment of them. To these, while they were slaves, the door of gradual emancipation was judiciously opened, which was all that the Society could then lawfully do; and they were duly prepared for entire freedom, by instruction in the value of that greater emancipation from the bondage of sin, with which Christ can set the sinner free.

The altered condition of the vast body of emancipated slaves has presented an opportunity, which the Society could not omit to improve, for the spiritual instruction of this long neglected race, to whom an heavy debt is due, and numbers of Missionaries, and Catechists, and Schoolmasters have accordingly been employed for their benefit, and many chapels and schoolhouses have already been erected.

You will be prepared to hear that such multiplied and extensive claims as have been thus brought upon the Society could not fail to call for an expenditure much beyond their annual income; and you will be grieved to hear that more than 100,000*l.* of their capital has been exhausted. They hoped, indeed, for a long time, and might well encourage the hope, when, in fulfilment of the inspired promises of prophecy, *Kings* had long been *the nursing fathers*, and *Queens the nursing mothers of the Church of Christ*, that it would be universally considered the paramount duty of a christian state, to extend the richest blessing it enjoys, the possession of pure and undefiled religion, to the remotest corners of the empire. Unhappily this obligation upon the State is now disputed, and the discharge of it has been too successfully opposed. The partial assistance which had always been afforded by the Government, and was materially augmented soon after the commencement of the present century, has been chiefly withdrawn, and unhappily at the very time when there was the utmost need for its large increase. It would ill become me in this place, and upon this occasion, to express all that may be felt, and very properly felt, respecting the opinions which have been maintained, and the policy which has been pursued, in this matter. But however erroneous these opinions may be, and however unwise that policy, the Colonial Church, and many meritorious Mission-

aries and innocent families, have suffered most grievously, and most undeservedly, from the measure which has been dealt to the Society.* Nor, perhaps, can effectual relief be hoped for, until the whole body of the Church, including all her lay members, shall respectfully and continually make known their feeling with one voice, in all christian meekness, but with christian firmness, from every parish in the kingdom; and so encourage and strengthen the rulers of the land in every effort they may piously desire to make for efficient support to the Colonial Church.

But in the mean time you will readily perceive that the whole Church, and every individual member of it, is called upon,—the laity of every rank and condition, whether rich or poor, as well as the Clergy,—yea, all without exception, are called upon to join with one heart and one mind, according to their several ability, in relieving the Society from their present embarrassment, and aiding them greatly to extend their important benefits on every side; and enough, I trust, has been said to satisfy you, that if the hands of the Society be sufficiently strengthened, by large and continual

* It would be painful to give a detail of all the sufferings which have lately been brought upon the Colonial Church. Many of her Clergy have been involved in distress, from which they will probably never be relieved. One Missionary was compelled to sell his books, that he might purchase bread for his children. Her glebes, her schools, her colleges, have all shared in the suffering.

contributions, they are not only equal to the wonderfully extensive work to which they are now called; but from their principles, and constitution, and management, are eminently qualified to be the almoners and agents of the whole Church in this pre-eminent work of christian charity. Permit me, then, to suggest that, in addition to very liberal contributions, as evidence of heartfelt interest in the object, and as an earnest of future and constant assistance, *every* member of this flock, yea, every member of the Church, should be enrolled as a permanent subscriber to the Society. Let not the poor be discouraged because they can give but little, for that little may be largely blessed in various ways. We would not have one devout member of the Church omitted from this holy union; and, that all may have an opportunity for being permanently connected with this good work, your spiritual pastors will be delighted to receive the name of *every individual* of their flocks who shall desire to be enrolled as a member of the Society.

And may not this duty be pressed more strongly upon you, my christian brethren, when we advert to the striking insufficiency of all that has yet been done for the transcendent objects of the Society by this great, and prosperous, and wealthy kingdom, which holds the loftiest station among the nations of the world. Who, indeed, can believe that the annual contributions of the whole kingdom have

not yet reached a fourth-part of the amount which the Society require for their present annual work ? and remember, for it is most important to remember, that the extent of this work is increasing, and must continue to increase, as the population in our wide-spread colonies must be continually extended.

Who does not feel that this great and flourishing portion of the kingdom, eminently distinguished in science and arts, and manufactures and wealth, has not yet had its proper share in this holy undertaking ? Its wealth supplies millions for the great objects in which it engages with worldly objects, while perhaps only hundreds have been scantily supplied for the highest objects of Heaven. But the pious members of the Church are not deaf to the present call. They encourage us to hope for better things in future.

How delightful would it be to see the members of our flocks, as in the infancy of the Church, bringing their weekly offerings, on the first day of the week, as God hath prospered them, to minister to the most distressing, because the spiritual, necessities of their absent and distant brethren !

Let me implore you not to regard the present merely as a common appeal to your benevolence, upon some ordinary occasion. The interests of the Church among your distant countrymen, and the eternal happiness of those members of the same spiritual body to which you belong, which ought to be more dear to you than any earthly considera-

tions, depend so much upon the success of the exertions which the Society are now making, and must never cease to make, that you will surely consider their appeal deserving of your kindest consideration and your utmost bounty. Do not be satisfied with giving, in such a cause, that which you can spare without the slightest sacrifice; rather resolve, with holy David, that you *will not offer unto the Lord your God of that which doth cost you nothing*; and count it a most happy opportunity which is now afforded you for contributing, from the richest of your substance, to the cause of God, and of His Church, and to the salvation of many souls. This is a feeling which once animated the members of our Church throughout the land; and splendid memorials of it surround us on every side. Never was there a time when there was greater need of its general revival, than in the present day; and we humbly trust that the great Head of the Church is now, in His mercy, awakening many of His faithful servants to a sense of the necessity for this revival. We rejoice to bear testimony to noble individual instances of such awakened feeling; and to testify also, that many of the oldest members of our Society, though they cannot be numbered among the most wealthy, upon considering the great disproportion of their annual subscription of two guineas, with the amazing extent of the calls upon the Society, and the surpassing importance of the objects of

those calls, have lately raised their annual subscriptions to five, ten, fifteen, and even twenty guineas. May the hearts of many who can spare such contributions be effectually moved to imitation of such goodly examples;—but let them not discourage the humblest offerings of the poor.

And now, my christian hearers, allow me, in conclusion, to inquire,—Who that is called by the name of his Redeemer, and knows the value of that name, is not ready to acknowledge that the enjoyment of such unbounded blessings and mercies as have long been extended to this most favoured land is designed to draw him more closely to that Redeemer? What Christian does not know and feel that he can only draw nigh to the God of his salvation by exercises of faith, and penitence, and prayer, and charity, the well-beloved of Heaven? and what charity is so ennobled, as that which would largely contribute to making the way of God effectually known to all around us, by helping to provide a free course for the Gospel, and extending the blessings of its saving health to the remotest part of our possessions?

May you then be animated in the fulness of an humbled, but thankful and confiding heart, thus to draw nigh to God, and be engaged in this labour of christian love. May you thus plead at the throne of grace, and plead successfully, through the only Mediator, for the *long preservation* of those mercies and those blessings, which have been

most richly bestowed upon yourselves and upon your country. May you be thus animated, by the blessing of God, with pure and holy desire and determination to be eminently distinguished in the noble work which now solicits the most earnest cooperation of every heart and every hand. Let the insignificance of all earthly possessions, while expended only on earthly objects, be deeply impressed upon your minds; and recollect the value that may be affixed to them, if blessed in their application to those objects which will be held in everlasting remembrance, when the transitory concerns of this fleeting world shall all pass away and be remembered no more.

But, my Christian brethren, it must be your desire that, through divine grace, the work to which you are now invited, may be rendered instrumental in making the way of God effectually known and followed by *ourselves*, and by all who pertain to us, *at home*, as well as abroad; and then may you hope for that blessing from above which will animate you in the noble desire and endeavour to carry a knowledge of the saving health which has been revealed from Heaven to the remotest corners of the earth. This indeed, in its fulness, must be the work of God, and His promise will be accomplished though man should never move in it, and all the powers of darkness should be leagued against it; for the time is coming when the *earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord*, yea, as

extensively and completely *as the waters cover the sea*. In the abundance of His goodness, He graciously permits His servants to assist, under His guidance, in preparing for this great display of His power and His love; but all that we would endeavour to do must be attempted in the full spirit of that gospel which is thus to overspread the earth with its holy and its heavenly influence. And therefore, while we afford our little help, and give continually from our substance, and even to the fullest measure of our ability, the offering must be made, not as unto man, but unto God. It must be attended by the fervent supplications of faith for that blessing from the Lord of all, which is essential to the value of the largest contributions of the wealthy, and can sanctify the humblest tribute of the poor, the widow's mite, the cup of water, or the whispered prayer; and can impart to these a value and a virtue which were never yet possessed by any unhallowed gift, however large in its amount.

And to Him, from whom alone the blessing can proceed, to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons in one undivided godhead, be ascribed all the glory, and all the praise, now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen.

THE END.

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